

FIRE! FIRE!

Affected MDOT Workers Relocated to Temporary Offices

The latter part of December is normally part of the holiday period that is a little slower-paced, a bit laid back – a time to spend with family and friends. Not so in December 2001, when a fire ravaged part of the Van Wagoner Transportation Building in Lansing.

Diane Davis, administrator of the Office of Quality and Reengineering, donned a hard hat, goggles and a cloth face mask following the fire to sift through what

used to be her third-floor office. But she was back on the job, along with about 150 of her co-workers whose offices were damaged by the Dec. 23 fire.

Considering the extensive damage to the building, “It could have been so much worse,” said Davis. “No one was killed. No one was injured. We’re thankful for that, and we’ll rebuild.”

The most significant damage was to the west end of the third floor, including Technological Services (particularly Mapping and Graphics units), OIM and OQR. These areas were damaged by fire. Heavy smoke damage occurred on the west end of Planning, Tech Services, OIM, OQR and the State-wide Transportation Planning Division will be relocated for approximately two to three months while their area is gutted and renovated.

The rest of the building was damaged as well. Heavy soot affected the east half of the third floor. The first and fourth floors suffered some smoke

damage, and the first floor suffered water damage. Fortunately, the second floor was vacant due to ongoing remodeling.

The cause of the fire may never be determined.

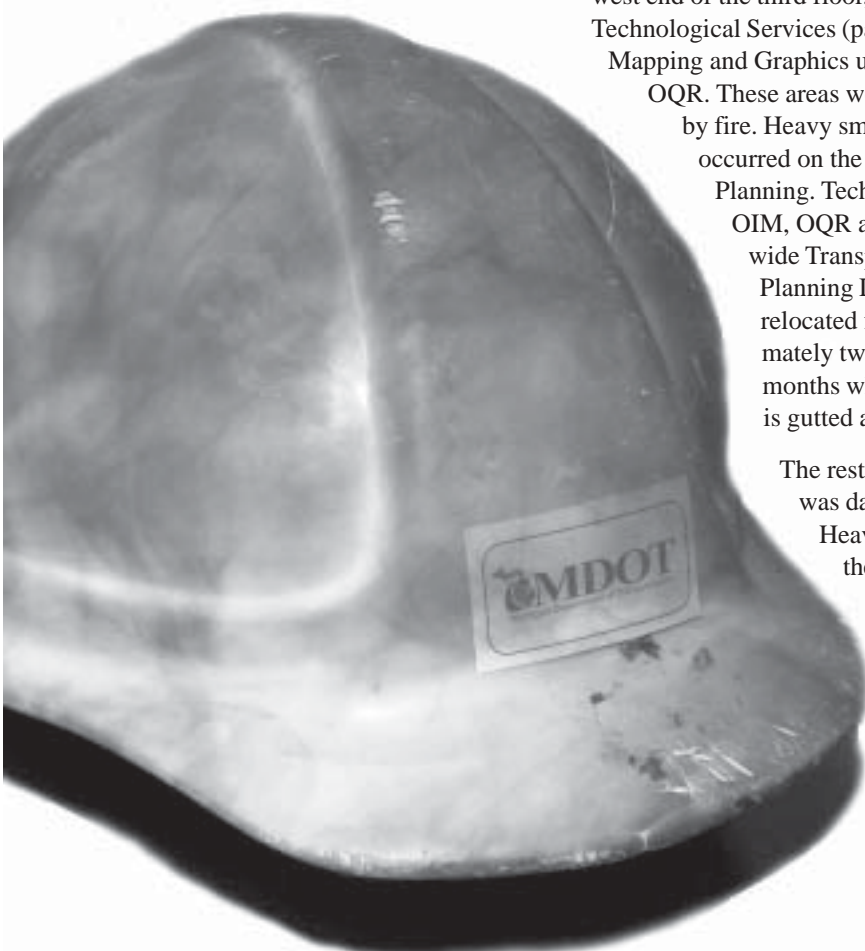
On Jan. 2, employees set up temporary offices in the Ottawa Building, one block west and connected to Van Wagoner by an underground tunnel.

“It’s amazing what people have done – the tech people, the DMB staff, management and all the people hired to clean. It’s unbelievable how fast they had us back in business,” said Julie Gee, OIM specialist, whose work unit and its contents were barely salvageable. She kept a small, soot-covered stuffed animal as a reminder of the experience.

The department’s computer room was not damaged in the blaze. Because the servers save all information at the end of each day, work was not lost.

“After the initial shock of seeing my office, I decided to be a big girl and not cry,” said Gloria Phillips, Statewide Planning unit. Still, the mess left behind was a challenge. “Everyone has really rallied together and pitched in,” Phillips said. “In a way, it has brought out the best in people.”

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Over the Bridge and through the "Woulds"

Snowplowing at Night They Go

If only motorists *would* learn to give snowplow operators a brake.

If only snow *would* fall during the day and not create whiteout conditions.

If only mailboxes *would* be placed in different locations along the highways.

If MDOT *would* just install video cameras on its trucks, everyone could see the many challenges operators face each winter.

According to Theresa Brockway, a 26-year MDOT employee from the Kalkaska garage, irresponsible driver behavior is a big concern annually. "People don't realize how much they actually get in the way. When following a snowplow, the best thing that someone can do is stay back and safely pass at the appropriate location or wait for us to turn around. It seems like every year people forget how to drive during the first few storms."

Theresa works the afternoon shift in the North Region and is on-the-job from 3 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. each week. Of course, she's on-call 24/7, too, just in case a snowstorm hits and extra staff is needed.

Although each storm is unique, one thing never changes: the fact that the trucks are extremely heavy and difficult to stop. "We can't stop on a dime. People need to think about that as they get close to a snowplow," said Brockway.

Nightfall further complicates the annual challenge of clearing the state roadways of snow and ice. Considering that the average northern Michigan winter dumps more snow in the Kalkaska area than some parts of the Upper Peninsula, it can get pretty demanding working on the highway.

North Region Maintenance Superintendent Tom Irvin described the situation like this: "When the only thing you can see at night is what's happening inside your cab, you're in for a long night."

"Actually, I prefer to plow at night," said Brockway. "There is less traffic and if someone is out there you can at least see a light. That same vehicle isn't as visible during the day."

One of the most difficult things operators deal with is poor visibility. Perched high above the cars, operators have to really focus their attention out over the hood and then back at the controls inside the cab with an occasional glance at the mirrors, while safely gliding across the highway scraping a clear path for miles...until, as sometimes happens, the wind blows just right (or wrong). Once in a while, as the plow clears the roadway, the wind gust picks up the snow and some ice and sends it crashing back down on the windshield. "When that happens, it can be quite alarming if you're really concentrating on what you're doing," said Brockway.



Theresa Brockway, Kalkaska garage, keeps one eye on the road and another on the controls.

Theresa and her crew are responsible for plowing US-131, M-66 and M-72 in Grand Traverse, Antrim and Kalkaska counties. Contrary to what some may believe, when transportation maintenance workers aren't actually plowing snow, there is a lot of other work to do. "We change blades, service vehicles, wash and clean our equipment, do patch work on the roads, and even install snow markers (delineators)," Brockway explained. "There's always something to do!"

While many people are enjoying holidays with families and friends or sitting in front their televisions at night, MDOT crews are always working to ensure that motorists can safely travel our state. Dealing with the nasty winter weather is a normal part of any snowplow operator's job. It's a job that must be done, but often is taken for granted.

"After spending hours on the road, you really begin to appreciate the finer things in life – like nature. It is awesome," said Brockway. "Right after a snowstorm in northern Michigan, it is absolutely beautiful."

Along with MDOT's "Don't Crowd the Plow" campaign message that is in high

gear this time of year, Theresa has a suggestion for motorists: "The next time you find yourself behind a plow, have patience. If you really need to pass, smile and wave at us as you go by. But keep the other hand on the wheel and pass safely. And, the passing relief lanes are a perfect spot to do that!"

MDOT's winter message hits the airwaves

A fast-paced 30-second public service announcement features two children playing with toy cars and a toy snowplow. Six-year-old Chad Felt is the son of Bob Felt, North Region's communications representative, and four-year-old Leah Vasquez is his companion in the video. The children's play simulates actions on the road.

Creators are hoping that when kids see this video, they will be the ones that end up saying, "Don't crowd the plow" and reminding the adults to slow down.

The airing of the video message was made possible by MDOT's Traffic and Safety Division, the Office of Communications and the Michigan Association of Broadcasters. 📺

Travel Safety Tips

- **Don't Crowd the Plow!** Motorists should keep a safe distance between their vehicles and a snowplow. Plowing may result in a cloud of snow, limiting visibility, and may throw ice, rocks or salt. Always be prepared for the unexpected.
- Buckle up every time you get in your car, van or truck. Help save lives. Be sure all vehicle occupants are belted. And buckle your babies, too. It's the law!
- Drive safe and sober.
- Stay awake and alert. Pull into a rest stop if you feel like you're getting tired. Have someone else drive, if possible.
- Watch for deer. If one does run in your lane, be bold and hold. It's better to hit the deer while braking than swerving into a ditch or causing another accident.
- Through your own courtesy on the road, show other drivers that road rage is a crazy way to drive.
- Don't pump your brakes if your vehicle is equipped with ABS. Apply steady pressure.



A peek at the controls inside the snowplow cab.

Just another beautiful Northern Michigan winter. But please don't crowd the plow.



Gregory J. Rosine

Deliver Today; Be Go-To Tomorrow

What Does it Really Mean?

"We have created a 'goodwill bank account' that we have not enjoyed for a long time. We earned it through our customer-service focus – and by proving we can deliver."

As the concept of *Deliver Today; Be Go-To Tomorrow* continues to grow within the department, I have heard that some people are seeking additional input as to what this phrase actually means.

In this issue, let's focus on the *Deliver Today* part. We can make *Deliver Today* a reality by recognizing the ultimate purpose of our job – whatever it may be. Essentially, if you're not serving our customer directly, you need to be serving someone who is.

MDOT exists for the purpose of making wise transportation investment decisions for the people of Michigan. Some of us make those decisions, or deliver the resulting products, services or information directly to the end users. The rest of us help others do their jobs better.

In an organization as large and complex as ours, there are many different customers. The residents and businesses of Michigan, the Legislature and Governor's Office are obvious examples, but there are others. We also have staff with internal functions whose responsibilities include various compliance and standards oversight, all with a wide range of mandates and time horizons.

This is complicated, messy stuff. If it were easy, it would happen automatically in all organizations. However, very few are able to do it well. The organizations who do it well are those who get *everyone* involved in the process. However, this does not happen by directive from a corner office somewhere. Instead, it happens in hundreds of conversations throughout the organization every day, where people are willing to be flexible, to understand ultimate purposes, to creatively invent new solutions together – to make 10,000 decisions per day. We all know that over the past few years a lot of our people have gone above and beyond the call of duty to build a new level of credibility for MDOT. We have created a "goodwill bank account" that we have not enjoyed for a long time. We earned it through our customer-service focus – and by proving we can deliver. Nothing builds credibility like being able to figure out a way to deliver whatever task you've been assigned. A goodwill bank account can get drained very quickly though. This is not fair, it is not just, it just is.

We are on a credibility roll right now. It has been hard earned, and we deserve it. We simply all need to remember that if we fail to deliver, we hurt our personal credibility, the credibility of our immediate team, the credibility of fellow MDOT people we may not even know, and, ultimately, the credibility of MDOT itself. Our credibility is a precious commodity and we can all help preserve it – by doing what it takes to *Deliver Today*. 🦋

FIRE!

Continued from page 1

Communications with employees following the fire and cleanup detail were handled by (no pun intended) Hot News Briefings and an Employee Emergency Information Line coordinated by Ari Adler, MDOT's director of communications.

"The level of communications following the fire and the cleanup was quite extraordinary," said Director Greg Rosine. "Most people don't realize what a tremendous coordination effort takes place behind the scenes, but with help from sophisticated communication tools and dedicated people – some working almost around-the-clock – we were able to keep disruption to transportation services at a minimum."

Applause! Applause! to all those who helped with cleaning up and restoring order to the once singed and sooty Van Wagoner Transportation Building. 🦋

WORTH repeating

"It is with our passions as it is with fire and water, they are good servants, but bad masters."

–Spanish Proverb

WORTH repeating

"When written in Chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters. One represents danger, and the other represents opportunity."

–John F. Kennedy, U.S. President

MDOT's Own Olympic Torch Bearer

At 73, Dick Young is very much involved in athletics and believes it is his new calling in life. He retired from MDOT in 1992, "but had the racing bug when I retired." At daybreak on Jan. 6, his dreams became reality as the Olympic torch arrived at the state Capitol steps for celebration activities. As early dawn arrived in mid-Michigan, area torch bearers began passing the flame eastward down Michigan Avenue. The specially selected torch bearers took turns running fifth-of-a-mile lengths to light the next torch.

Dick was nominated by Norma, his wife of 45 years, to bear the torch. She said that Dick is an inspiration to others. Before his retirement in 1992, he began running. "I had 15 years of back troubles and the doctor recommended I start swimming. The swimming turned to an interest in triathlons and I began running at 61," Dick explained.

He routinely trains for marathons and triathlons by running 20 miles a week. He's run in marathons in New York, Traverse City, Detroit and, most recently, Chicago, where he beat his 1994 time. This summer he will compete in the San Diego *Rock 'n Roll Marathon*.

"Being part of the torch relay is really an unbelievable honor," Dick said. "I feel like my purpose in life now is to inspire anybody who has to go through an experience like what I went through – to let them know that something better can come out of it."

Dick Young became part of a chain of torch bearers. During the flame's 13,500-mile journey, 11,520 torch bearers carried the flame – taking it from Olympia, Greece, all the way to Salt Lake City, Utah, for the 2002 Winter Games opening ceremony Feb. 8.

"The camaraderie with the other torch bearers, the enthusiasm of miles of spectators waving flags and the loyalty of friends and family made the day complete," he said. "By 7 a.m. I learned my torch would be lit by Tom Izzo, the MSU basketball coach. As we waited inside the East Lansing shuttle bus for the flame to catch up to us, I talked to the man I would give the flame to and we all told our stories of how we got to be torch bearers. There was an Olympic wrestling coach, an 80-year-old gymnastics coach and a TV sports guy."

Young said a news clip of Izzo lighting his torch appeared on ESPN's telecast of the Indiana/MSU basketball game.



COURTESY OF DICK YOUNG

Just for the record, Dick worked in bridge design for 35 years, prior to his career as an Olympic torch bearer. He started in 1957 and worked on the Highway Sufficiency Survey, driving about 9,000 miles of state trunkline every year for three years. They evaluated road conditions, creating a complete road inventory.

Although he enjoyed his work, no MDOT experience was quite as thrilling as carrying the Olympic torch. "The excitement, thrill and euphoria of carrying a flame that's never been extinguished from Greece and carried by 11,520 torch bearers was the thrill of a lifetime," Dick said. 🏆

MDOT's FieldManager Wins National Award



The FieldManager team gathers for a celebration in Lansing after winning the 2002 CIO Magazine Enterprise Value Award.

FieldManager, the innovative suite of software used for managing and tracking road and bridge construction projects, is the recipient of a prestigious 2002 *CIO Magazine Enterprise Value Award*. MDOT was one of five organizations nationwide to receive the award given to a select group for creating IT applications and systems that transform the way business is done.

"FieldManager has streamlined MDOT's operations to save taxpayers more than \$20 million per year in reduced hands-on time," said Gary Taylor, chief engineer, Highway Technical Services. "It has transformed project management in our industry." The software is now used by more than 1,200 users at 240 facilities around the state – including 41 MDOT offices, 77 private firms and 124 local agencies.

In the past, road and bridge inspectors statewide would go to each work site armed with a pad of Inspector's Daily Reports and a pen. As work progressed, the inspectors would fill out these documents by hand, tracking significant volumes of work items and the materials required for each work item – everything from earth excavation to grout. At the end of the day, the inspectors would hand

FieldManager has streamlined MDOT's operations to save taxpayers more than \$20 million per year in reduced hands-on time.

—Gary Taylor, chief engineer,
Highway Technical Services

in the report, then the office technicians would have to manually re-enter the data. MDOT needed an army of office workers to verify contractors' work. Today, it is rare to send more than one field technician to a site. Inspector Daily Report data is now entered into a laptop and transmitted electronically back to the office.

The success of the program is directly related to the partnering of information technology employees with MDOT's business employees and users. With constant feedback from users in the field, and a remarkable financial partnership between MDOT and Florida-based software company Info Tech, Inc., the program has been an unprecedented success story.

"Our success with information technology is directly related to the integration of our IT people and our business people," said Chief Information Officer Doug Couto. "FieldManager is a very effective partnership and one that we use as a model for all our IT projects department-wide."

Kevin Fox, system administrator, and Cliff Farr, business team leader for FieldManager, involve users in development efforts – from inviting groups of users to test new features, to holding annual group meetings to suggest future changes. "You know the things that you say are going to count," said Sandra Aldrich, records technician for the Road Commission of Macomb County.

The final agreement allows MDOT and Info Tech to co-own the software. Info Tech has the right to sell the software, but has to dedicate licensing fees that are paid by other states to the development of FieldManager. The contract also grants Michigan's state and local transportation agencies a perpetual license to the software, mandates that MDOT approves any future changes to it and pays MDOT royalties from sales to private users. 📍

Life Before FieldManager

The following observations were made by Roy Holcomb, technical assistant, Brighton TSC, on what it was like to fill out an Inspector's Daily Report in the days before FieldManager.

"In 1980, I was asked to handle the office tech position for the first time. I had been staking and inspecting for 11 years. No office experience. Fourteen projects, about \$3.5 million and I didn't have a clue. I learned by doing it...wrong.

I posted eight to 10 IDRs a day. Estimates were computed by hand. Recommendations were processed with carbon copies and were done over if there was more than a little typo. There was no standardization. Every set of files had a slightly different numbering system. And every project engineer would have some pet way he liked the files done, the estimates processed, progress reports filled out....

By the end of the summer I thought I had a pretty good handle on it and applied for a work element. But my supervisor said there were too many mistakes and I was inconsistent. He had me do it over another year. I was upset at first, but then saw it as a tremendous learning experience.

Two years ago, Tim Anderson came into the Brighton TSC to be the office tech. He came in with two years of field experience, but a workload of eight or nine jobs worth \$50 million which represented about 10 to 15 or more IDRs a day. He spent a few days learning with Yvonne Guerra at Tecumseh and took over at Brighton. He didn't stand a chance...or did he? Enter FieldManager!

The IDRs are automated. The files are standardized. Engineer idiosyncracies have to be within that framework. Estimates are automated and mathematically correct. If necessary, a corrective estimate can be in Lansing in 15 minutes. Recommendations are simple, editable and automated. Quantities are always totaled up-to-date. Breakdowns are available in ways that were not even thought of when I began.

Tim has done fine and gets better every day. That workload under the old system would have taken at least three full-time people.

I wanted to record this because the experience of "how it used to be" will leave with many of us in the near future. And I'm glad the new field techs don't have to do it the old way, but they should have a feel for what it was like before FieldManager."

Abracadabra!

Graphics' Magic Transforms MDOT Newsletter

Each designer wanted to submit their own design for the newsletter. They did this when developing the state map design and it won an award!

—Keith Belonga,
Acting Manager, Departmental Services

It was high time *MDOT Today* had a new graphic image. The MDOT employee newsletter had been sporting the same look since the previous design was introduced in the May 1997 issue. The Office of Communications approached Keith Belonga, acting manager, Departmental Services, to request that Graphics personnel apply their magic. Keith, in turn, discussed Communications' request with the graphic designers on his staff: Gary Eiseler, Kris Hart, Brian Whitfield and Randy Debler. What the group decided to do is the very stuff team awards are made of.

"It was completely their idea," said Keith. "Each designer wanted to submit their own design for the newsletter. They did this when developing the state map design (for the 2001 Official State Map) and it won an award!" The selected map design – created by Brian – won Technological Services Division a first-place AASHTO award for the *illustration/photo illustration* category.

It's no surprise they win awards. The Graphics team represents exceptional creative skills and a wealth of graphics experience. Collectively, the Graphics team has nearly 30 years of experience in producing graphics at MDOT alone.

The Graphics team is responsible for producing art for the majority of MDOT's extensive print needs. This includes: logos, brochures, booklets, maps, posters, newsletters, folders, annual reports, banners, exhibits, displays, and anything else needed for the job – plus Web work.

Along with Communications, Graphics personnel are key players in helping MDOT to present a consistent, professional image to the public – which is critical in establishing department identity, recognition and credibility.

MDOT Today's new look was created by Randy Debler. Way to go to all and a tip of the (magician's top) hat to Randy! 🎩

Need a Magic Wand?

MDOT's graphic design team prides itself in providing creative, cutting-edge solutions. They're full of great ideas! If you need to produce something for your area, contact Keith Belonga to discuss or initiate your next graphics project: call 517-373-0622 or e-mail belongak@michigan.gov. Once he has all the information needed, he will assign it to a Graphics staff member. Thanks to today's electronic technology that allows for e-mail correspondence and PDF (Portable Document Format) proofs for customer feedback, you most likely won't need to visit their offices at all – unless you want to, of course.

Some of my more memorable projects at MDOT include designing the new MDOT logo, working on a team to create the MITS exhibit for display at Cobo Hall, and creating "Asset Management" print materials.

—Kris Hart

I enjoy my work so I like most all my jobs, but my favorite one at MDOT was probably working on the Rideshare Campaign for UPTRAN. Because I was involved from the beginning, the look we achieved is exactly what we had envisioned.

—Randy Debler

Because I have a fine arts background, I like the jobs that give me the most creativity – such as the Great Lakes International Aviation Conference and the State Transportation Map.

—Brian Whitfield

The project that I enjoyed the most would have to be the Blue Water Bridge Second Span grand opening celebration. I designed the logo which appeared on everything from flags flying on the bridge to commemorative bottles of wine. It was even airbrushed on the dessert at the celebration dinner.

—Gary Eiseler

"MDOT Up Close" is a new feature of MDOT Today. This series will take a close-up look at the many different areas that make up the department, focusing on what is unique to that MDOT work environment. The second article of this series focuses on the Office of Commission Audits. On page 10, another article from this series focuses on the Bureau of Transportation Planning.

Office of Commission Audits Up Close

Who We Are and What We Do

The Office of Commission Audits has been providing independent audit services to MDOT since the late 1960s. The office has a staff of 30 auditors, plus support personnel. It is under the direction of Commission Auditor Jerry Jones, a CPA with more than 26 years of experience, who reports directly to the State Transportation Commission.

The office is divided into three divisions: Internal Audit Division, External Transportation Services Division, and External Highway Services Division. The major services provided by the office

include operational audits of all major MDOT activities to determine the effectiveness of operations and compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, post audits of department contracts with local units of government and consultants, and pre-negotiation audits of proposed department agreements. Commission Audits is also responsible for providing advice on financial and audit matters to the State Transportation Commission, Director Greg Rosine and other department management.

The job of auditor is crucial in this day and age when financial restraint is critical to the successful management of a state department. "If the department operates more efficiently, it can get more work done and be more effective," said Chief Examiner Frank Morway. "It's as simple as that."

What do auditors do? They are here to help. Their actions help to assure that the department's program results are achieved, resources are economically and efficiently utilized, and MDOT complies with laws and regulations. They conduct audits which are detailed, methodical analyses of processes to determine if they are complete and effective, and of accounts and financial records to determine their accuracy.

Jerry Jones and his staff have worked hard to establish an atmosphere of positive communication with clients – whether the client is within MDOT, a consultant or a local unit of government. Doug Witte, a 26-year veteran of Commission Audits who oversees the Internal Audit Division, said: "We have proven to be an important asset in assisting the department in improving its operations – and not an adversary. Making a positive impact continues to be one of our primary goals."

"We prefer to assist in the resolution of an issue during the development of a project, rather than cite the issue later in an audit," Jones said. "We have a broad-based knowledge of MDOT and its operations. Forget the common misconception of an auditor. There is no need to be nervous. We can help you become more efficient, assist you in improving your operation and in strengthening your internal controls."

An auditor looks for documented policies, written instructions and guidelines that staff follows, measurable goals and objectives, and documented measurements on these objectives.

Where do auditors come from? They're normally accounting majors from auditing agencies, finance areas, or fresh out of college. There is a lot of competition for hiring accountants. "I'm impressed by the fact that our auditors go on to other jobs within the department and do quite well," said Doug Witte. "The knowledge they gained as auditors makes them valuable, versatile employees. Auditors are analytical and this ability makes them critical players on any staff."

Patrick McCarthy has been an auditor for three years with Commission Audit's External Transportation Services Division. He has an accounting degree and is working on obtaining his CPA

Going To Be Audited?

A Checklist for Working with the Auditor

- Opening conference scheduled with the deputy director and staff to discuss the broad scope of the audit.
- Define specifically what will be audited, including areas/processes that you would like reviewed.
- Before the audit is completed, you will be given an opportunity to fill in any gaps.
- Preliminary draft issued (your written comments will be requested for inclusion in the final report).
- Closeout conference held with deputy director and staff to discuss findings and recommendations, along with the department's response.
- Final revisions made to the audit report and response.
- Final report issued.



Michele Klein, executive assistant, and Jerry Jones, commission auditor, prepare for another busy day.



Commission Audits staff works hard on positive communication. Just ask: (front row) Mary Lou Thelen, Tom Barker, Jim Dascola; (back row) Jim Duso and David Hicks.

Challenges

“Our auditors are trained to take the facts as presented and sort them out, without preconceived ideas, and make recommendations, if necessary, after thorough analysis,” said Jerry Jones. “In doing so, we strive to keep our work positive.”

“For some people, an audit can be stressful, but it doesn’t need to be,” said Myron Frierson, administrator of Real Estate, whose division was audited last fall. “An audit is not something to be afraid of. It’s important to remember that operational auditing is an assessment process which is consistent with a key principle of Total Quality Management – measurement.”

“We found it helpful to meet with the auditors in advance and have a dialog about everyone’s expectations. Ultimately, the audit of our excess property program indicated we were in substantial compliance with the department’s policies and procedures. The auditors recommended we fine-tune our operation by writing down and documenting some longtime practices. It’s easy to do things out of habit if you’ve done them for a long time. The audit pointed out the need to clarify some important procedures.”

“I am a former auditor,” Myron said. “I believe auditors should be objective and work together with the people they’re auditing. Auditors are there to help – not to nail someone or some thing.”

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2000-2001 Facts Worth Considering

- Completed 2,413 total projects utilizing 90 percent of planned resources.
- Audited approximately \$273 million of contract costs.
- Issued over 230 audit reports covering 750 projects.
- Issued five Internal Audit Reports.
- Issued 18 prenegotiation audits covering approximately \$78 million in proposed projects costs.
- Completed 1,028 agreement reviews and 488 authorization reviews.

How To Reach Us

- Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor 517-373-2384
- Frank Morway, Chief Examiner 517-373-1500
- Doug Witte, Internal Audit Administrator 517-373-1500
- Cynthia Hickey, Assistant Internal Audit Administrator 517-373-1500
- Tom Barker, Assistant External Audit Administrator 517-373-1500



Internal Audit Division staff: (front row) Sylvi Stock, Erin Tryon, Doug Witte, Kathy Black and Kelly Arens; (back row) Bob Mysliwski, Cindi Hickey and Dean Harr.

certification. His work experience at Commission Audits qualifies for CPA certification. “It’s interesting to work with different consultants – whether they are design, soil testing or railroad consultants. You learn something new from every consultant...and no two are alike,” said Patrick.

Kelly Arens is the newest member of the staff, having just graduated from Grand Valley State University last spring. “Most of what I’ve learned these past few months has to do with state policies, procedures and regulations,” she said. “I’ve also learned a lot about the structure of the state and how expansive the government is. I don’t know if a lot of people realize how much work and how many people it takes to run a government.

“People usually think of accountants as the stereotypical, boring bean-counter types. But our office isn’t like that at all. The people in our office have a good sense of humor and are a good-natured group. I’ve found everyone to be very welcoming. My favorite part of the job is the investigative nature of some of our audits. I find that kind of work the most interesting.”

Forget the common misconception of the auditor. These folks are here to help improve operations. They are: (front row) Linda Shepard, Yvonne Austin, and Valerie Wales-Beatty; (back row) Russ Venaska, Kathy Yager, Jerry Armstrong and Frank Morway. (Not all staff was able to be present for photos.)



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Bureau of Transportation Planning Up Close

Who We Are and What We Do

What do counting vehicles, checking for endangered species, and asking Congress to build a new lock at the Soo have in common? They are all activities done by MDOT's Bureau of Transportation Planning. The activities of the Bureau are so varied, one wonders how they all tie together, so here's the thread: They all provide information needed to make transportation capital investment decisions and help keep Michigan eligible for federal aid programs and projects.

First, we have to know how much money we have – and the parameters for spending that money. Planning helps in two ways: working with the state's office in Washington, D.C., to encourage Congress to adopt the highest possible spending levels to obtain the best possible share for Michigan, and working with MDOT leadership to set departmental policies and spending levels for federal and state funds.

Terry Gotts, policy administrator, and the Intermodal Policy Division staff already are beginning to draft strategies for the next federal reauthorization, which will come before Congress in 2003. "This is where it all begins, getting favorable spending levels and formulas. Much of our ability to make things better has its roots in reauthorization," said Gotts.

The federal funds come to Michigan with many strings attached. A large part of the Statewide Planning Division's responsibility is to ensure that federal requirements are met so that MDOT can qualify and maintain eligibility for federal aid. Among the requirements are the creation of a 20-year State Long-Range Transportation Plan, and a three-year listing of state and local federal aid projects – the State Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP. Statewide Planning also coordinates with the metropolitan planning organizations and local road agencies to ensure that federal requirements are being met.

Once the funds come to Michigan, they have to be divided among the various programs. Michigan fuel taxes also have to be allocated and coordinated, both within the department and among the other eligible transportation agencies in the state. Again, the Statewide Planning Division has the lead role in managing the capital program.

"With limited funds, and seemingly unlimited needs, we have to be sure we're making the best use of the resources we have," said Denise Jackson, division administrator for the Statewide Planning Division. "That means working with the regions and other MDOT divisions to test different funding and expenditure scenarios and see how they impact the condition of the transportation system. This, along with the Transportation Management Systems, is how we make sure we're making the best investments." One output of the entire process is the 5-Year Road and Bridge Program.

Testing all those scenarios requires a lot of data. From road condition to travel demand modeling to traffic counts, data collection and analysis are major activities in the bureau, particularly in the Transportation Planning Services Division.

In addition to data used for making road investment decisions and allocation of federal funds, an abundance of data is collected on a statewide basis as part of intermodal planning and coordination. MDOT Bureau of Highways and UPTRAN – along with other transporta-

tion agencies – rely on the Planning Bureau for leadership on specialized intermodal programs, such as non-motorized facilities, carpool parking lots, aviation and transit planning.

"The residents of Michigan look to MDOT and our local partners to provide not only a top quality highway system, but also non-motorized pathways and carpool parking lots, where appropriate, and an excellent aviation and transit system. We are committed to providing intermodal systems that both complement and are coordinated with our highway programs," said Jim Brush, manager of the Travel Demand and Intermodal Services Section.

When the road system itself becomes overburdened, folks in the Project Planning Section of the Project Planning Division step



Environmental employees Michael Pennington and Lee Sherwood review the US-131 Manton wetland mitigation site prior to construction with Duke Domke, DEQ; and Bob Lindeck, Wexford County Road Commission



COURTESY OF PLANNING

forward. They are involved in the early planning stages, evaluating potential capacity improvements, important economic investment projects, and new road alternatives. Then they work on the development of those projects. In addition, traffic analyses for all road and bridge projects utilizing federal funding is performed within the division.

The Environmental Section of the Project Planning Division ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by coordinating the environmental clearance process. The Environmental Section provides environmental clearance not only for large capacity improvement projects, but for every MDOT project using federal funds.

According to Ron Kinney, manager of the Environmental Section, "Many people don't realize that even very small projects need environmental review to ensure consideration of social, economic and natural environments." Last year

more than 1,314 projects were cleared for federal aid and 44 permits were obtained to facilitate the construction of those projects.

The Bureau of Planning is particularly proud to house MDOT's Cultural Resources Office. This office is responsible for ensuring MDOT complies with all historic preservation laws and regulations in the development of our projects. The office maintains a full-service staff with expertise in all aspects of Cultural Resource protection, and strives to improve both the quality and timeliness of cultural resource clearances. For example, the staff was able to negotiate a Program Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office, which allows MDOT to do its own in-house historical clearances for projects.

"Streamlining environmental clearance gives us more control over our schedules and allows us to help regions deliver their construction programs on time," said Margaret Barondess, cultural resources coordinator. For their efforts, the team won an Exemplary Award from AASHTO's Standing Committee on Quality. They have won other state and national awards, including the prestigious National Quality Initiative Award for the S-Curve Archeological Project, and their historic bridge video – "Archways to Our Past" – has been on every PBS station in Michigan!

Challenges

One pressing challenge is planning for safety and security in the transportation infrastructure in the wake of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. For example, security at Michigan's border crossings with Canada has become a greater focus nationally.

"MDOT has no authority to settle the Customs and Immigration and Naturalization Services inspection

issues, yet the decisions made by those agencies will have a major impact on our infrastructure and on Michigan's economy," said Susan Mortel, Planning and Program Operations director.

Another immediate challenge is adjusting the five-year plan to accommodate budget cuts. There is a good chance that the impact on FY2002 projects will be small, since a lot of the work has already been contracted. The Program Planning Division is working with the Financial Operations Division to consider options in dealing with the reductions and the impact on projects planned after FY2002.

A third challenge is to complete the update of MDOT's State Long-Range Transportation Plan, a document which sets policies and strategies for the next 25 years. This plan is the culmination of 10 months of meetings with the Transportation Customers and Providers Advisory Committee and more than 25 public meetings to solicit input. Once the plan is complete, subsequent plans that are specific to each region, yet consistent with the overall plan, will be developed.

Celebrating Success

A newer challenge to the department was devising an asset management program. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board issued a recommendation (GASB 34) in 1999 that governments begin reporting the value of their infrastructure, including transportation assets, and the rate at which they are depreciating. This allows MDOT and the public to see the financial benefit or burden of our efforts.

Continued on page 12

Denise Jackson, Statewide Planning Division, and her team of Craig Newell, Cyndi VonKlingler, Barb Davarn, Dave Wresinski and Susan Richardson take five to pose with one of their critical products: MDOT's 5-Year Road and Bridge Program.



Bureau of Transportation Planning Up Close

Continued from page 11

Many states are overwhelmed by the prospect of developing an asset management system. Fortunately, MDOT began developing transportation management systems in the early 1990s, and they are a cornerstone to our asset management program. The Bureau of Transportation Planning worked closely with folks in other parts of the department to develop asset management strategies for roads and bridges.

In fact, bureau Deputy Director Lou Lambert's involvement in asset management discussions at the national level was so strong that when local officials contacted the Federal Highway Administration in Washington for more information, FHWA referred those officials to Lou. MDOT already was incorporating sound transportation asset management strategies and systems when GASB 34 was issued, so now we are the national "go-to" people in asset management. We share in celebrating this department-wide success.

Boss' Corner

Lou Lambert, deputy director for Planning, expresses his pride in Planning's work. "I have been at MDOT over 30 years. In that time, this bureau has had to reinvent itself more than once. Most recently, ISTEA, and then TEA-21, accompanied by dramatic changes in technology, have impacted the way MDOT manages its programs and communicates with its customers. With each changing condition we took a step back, looked at how we were doing things, and asked 'is this still relevant and is there a better way?' And each time our employees have risen to the challenge, forging new and better processes and products."

Improving the way we do business has additional rewards, he added. "The work we do assures the public that every penny they give us is not just spent by MDOT – it is *invested* in a way that yields the greatest possible transportation benefit." 🐼

Office of Commission Audits Up Close

Continued from page 9

Celebrating Success

Like many areas of MDOT, the workload for auditors is ever increasing. "I am very proud of the accomplishments of this staff," Jones said. For 2000-2001, the Office of Commission Audits completed 2,413 total projects, 112 percent of their plan. In doing so, they audited approximately \$273 million of reported contract costs, issuing more than 230 audit reports covering 750 jobs. The recommended return to MDOT was in excess of \$9 million.

Recently, the Department of Management and Budget engaged Plante & Moran to analyze the coverage and effectiveness of resources directed to internal audit-related activities across Michigan state government's executive branch operations. The results of that review indicated that the Office of Commission Audits was performing exceptionally well in a number of areas that were assessed. DMB plans on working with the Office of Commission Audits to develop plans to build upon their strengths and improve the effectiveness of the state's internal audit organizations.

"More and more people are asking us for advice in advance," Morway said. "I believe this is a sign of a successful auditing operation." 🐼

Who To Call

With such a diversified Bureau, people are often at a loss about who to call. Here are some of the specific activities and who to call for more information.

- Act 51 Certifications - Nancy Ballard
- Air Quality - Pete Porciello
- Asset Management - Rick Lilly
- Aviation Planning - Steve Vertalka
- Border Issues - Kris Wisniewski
- Carpool Parking Lots - Amy Lindstrom
- Capacity Improvement Questions - Susan Hohl or Dave Wresinski
- Congestion Data - Susan Gorski
- Data Collection - Bill Tansil
- Facts and Figures Book - Tim Guenther
- Functional Classification - Susan Berquist
- Geographic Framework Project - Joyce Newell
- Heritage Routes - Peter Hanses
- Historic Bridges - Margaret Barondess
- HPMS Data (Highway Performance Monitoring System) - Don Howe
- Intelligent Transportation Systems - Kunwar Rajendra
- Marine and Rail Freight Issues - Larry Karnes
- Policy Development - Terry Gotts
- Public hearings - Jose Lopez
- State Long-Range Transportation Plan - Marsha Small
- State Transportation Improvement Program - Terry Eldred
- Status of Environmental Clearance for Projects - Paul McAllister
- Sufficiency - Patrick Allen
- Transportation Management Systems - Ron Vibbert or Marty Lontz
- Truck Issues - Suzanne Benton
- Weigh Stations - Jim Brush

WORTH repeating

"The difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter."
—Anonymous

MDOT Crew Caught Between the Road and a Hard Place

Have you ever wondered where all that stuff that floats down the road in a rainstorm actually goes? It ends up in the catch basin, of course. Well, most of it. Some call it a sewer. It also has been referred to as the subterranean entrance to the home of the once-popular Ninja Turtles.

The North Region organized a special crew of three to travel the northern 24 counties in Michigan to perform some exceptional maintenance work on these catch basins.

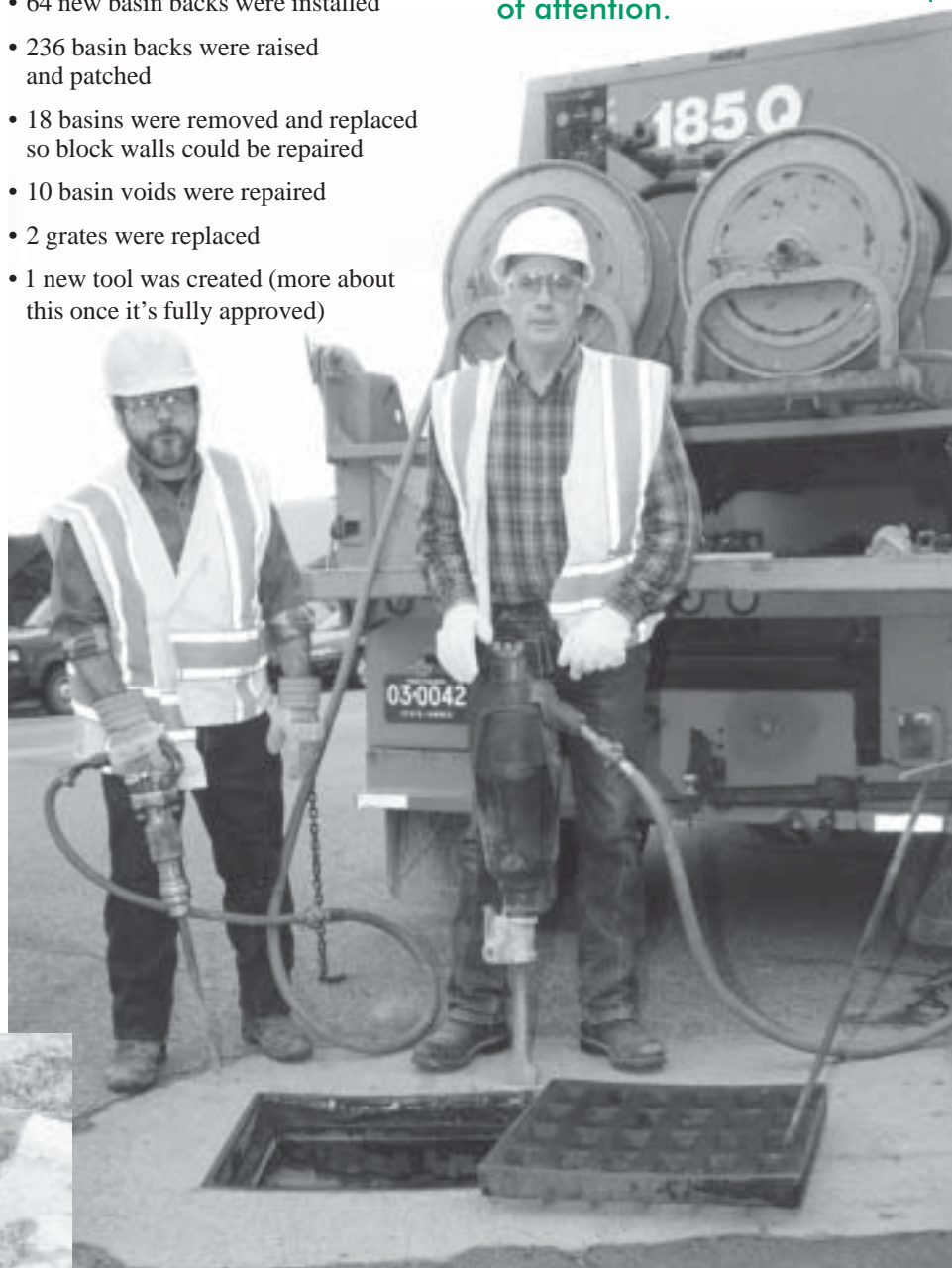
Headed by Reed City garage worker Doug Smith, a trio from MDOT spent an entire summer caught between the road and a hard place. The crew traveled up and down the state, literally in some cases, for a special **R&R** tour of duty – that is, **Restoring and Repairing** the various catch basins throughout northern Michigan. The tour's mission was to locate, inspect, analyze, repair and/or replace catch basins. Doug's team included co-worker Jim Rider and Marion garage worker Lyn Zuiderveen.

What's so special about all of this work? Well, the motoring public can rest assured now that the roadways are actually much safer. The proactive work reduces the likelihood of a sink hole washing out the road in the future. It also adds an aesthetically pleasing dimension to a once washed-up situation.

Because of the dedication, creativity and flexibility of the crew, the following work was accomplished last year:

- 21 new basins were installed (at 500 lbs. each!)
- 64 new basin backs were installed
- 236 basin backs were raised and patched
- 18 basins were removed and replaced so block walls could be repaired
- 10 basin voids were repaired
- 2 grates were replaced
- 1 new tool was created (more about this once it's fully approved)

The crew expects to be back out in 2002 to catch even more basins in need of attention.



Doug Smith (right) and Jim Rider get ready to repair a basin back.



Roberta Tisdale

"Early Out" Means "Getting Out Late" to OHR Staff

"The pending 'early out' is to OHR like a meteorologist forecasting a blizzard to the community. Everyone knows it's coming, but they don't know how bad it's going to be. All they can do is prepare for any contingencies."

-Sylvia Alexander

"Those who get to take advantage of the 'early out' are like schoolchildren who get a snow day. And OHR is like the local radio station that gets bombarded with the question, 'will there be school today?' We are seeing a definite increase in calls."

-Dee Nelson

The Office of Human Resources is divided into three sections to handle the many, diverse issues that department employees face daily: Personnel Services, Compensation and Benefits, and Employee Services (Disability Management/Labor Relations). Three experienced managers head up these areas respectively: Sylvia Alexander, Dee Nelson, and Rosemary Perla. This article will focus on the sections managed by Sylvia and Dee – the two sections that MDOTers are most likely to use. These managers were plenty busy before the potential "early out" was introduced.

Sylvia Alexander, Manager Personnel Services Section



Sylvia has been with MDOT for 24 years – 18 of them in human resources. Sylvia said, "I enjoy working here because MDOT, unlike many other state agencies, encourages a pioneering spirit and tries to avoid getting bogged down in the bureaucracy. And, because MDOT is well respected in the human resources community, other state agencies look to us to see how we do it. We had a JOBS (Jobs Opportunity Bi-Weekly Statement) on the Internet before Civil Service did."

This section handles Selections, Classifications, and Recruitment. Primary section responsibilities include the classifying of all positions; the monitoring and approval of selection and recruitment activities used to fill positions; and serving as liaison between Civil Service and management in department structuring and reorganization.

What does she like most about her job?
Sylvia says she likes that there is always something new to learn or experience. And, as a manager, she enjoys seeing her staff grow and develop – sometimes beyond their own expectations.

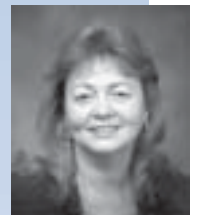
What does she like least?

Sylvia says she gets frustrated with a classification system that sometimes pigeonholes people into titles that can inhibit their desire and/or opportunities to earn and grow to their full potential.

Section responsibilities

- Process establishment of new positions in MDOT
- Review and process reallocations for employees
- Oversee all selection processes for vacancies
- Review staffing structures in all divisions and regions
- Review and process *working out of classification* requests
- Coordinate non-routine retirement activities

Dee Nelson, Manager Compensation and Benefits Section



Dee recently joined the MDOT team as the Manager of the Compensation and Benefits Section. Dee has worked in human resources-related jobs with the state for 27 years, providing her with considerable knowledge of the DCDS system, as well as Civil Service rules and regulations related to the compensation area. "Now that HRMN – the new payroll system – has been implemented and we are more confident how to use it, we can begin focusing more on our processes and how to make them more efficient." Dee said.

What does she like most about her job?

Dee says she likes working with OHR staff and she is excited about having the opportunity to make both office and department-wide improvements that will provide better service to MDOT employees.

What does she like least?

Due to the volume of work, Dee says there often is not enough time to respond quickly and thoroughly to employee questions. Questions are so specific to an individual's situation that it makes it difficult to respond quickly and accurately. However, she wants MDOTers to know she takes their requests seriously.

Section responsibilities

- Process time and attendance using DCDS for MDOT
- Calculate and enter payroll adjustments
- Enter employee data into the new state payroll system, HRMN for new and returning employees
- Manage benefits enrollment and changes for MDOT employees
- Process employee departures and retirements

Roberta Tisdale is the
Office of Human Resources administrator.
To reach her, call 517-373-1680.

Her e-mail address is: tisdaler@michigan.gov.



We're pleased to bring you this *MDOT Today* column (introduced last issue) which includes news about changes in the MDOT family tree: new hires, appointments, promotions, retirements, and, sadly, deaths. The information is supplied by the Office of Human Resources for Sept. 1 to Dec. 23, 2001. If you wish to include news about births or adoptions in your family, please contact the *MDOT Today* staff or send any information via GroupWise to MDOTToday@michigan.gov.

New Hires

Renae Allen, general office assistant 7, Taylor TSC, Metro Region

John Backstrom, drafting technician 9, Highway Operations, Metro Region

Doug Balderson, transportation maintenance worker 6, University Region

Lloyd Baldwin, historian 11, Project Planning, Planning

Carol Benner, personnel management assistant 7, Human Resources, Executive

Frank Boston, land surveyor 12, Design

Pascal Bui, transportation engineer 11, Production, Design

Tracy Buycks, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge, University Region

Kesha Carmack, printing typesetter 9, Technological Services, Finance and Administration

Christina Conley, general office assistant 6, Southwest Region

Mark Crouch, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge, University Region

Steven Douglas, property specialist 14, Escanaba, Superior Region

Anthony Duda, drafting technician 10, Bridge Design

Michael Eastman, drafting technician 10, Development, Grand Region

Tom Feldpausch, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge, University Region

Robert Felt, communications representative 12, Communications, North and Superior regions

Brian Finch, secretary 8, Administration, Detroit TSC, Metro Region

Brian Fish, land surveyor 11, Surveys, University Region

Craig Fisher, transportation maintenance worker 6, Adrian, University Region

Mike Fulkerson, transportation maintenance worker 6, University Region

Clifford Graves, transportation maintenance worker 6, Bay Region

Cory Halbert, engineering technician 8, Bridges and Pavement, Construction and Technology

Victoria Hare, secretary 8, Traffic and Safety, Grand Region

Carolyn Kieft, land surveyor 9, Surveys, Design

Michele Klein, senior executive management assistant 11, Commission Audits, Executive

Roman Klein, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge, University Region

David Langhorst, transportation planning specialist 14, Executive, North Region

Eric McGowan, drafting technician 8, Bridge Design, Design

Greg Meiring, transportation maintenance worker 6, Adrian, University Region

Jonathan Myers, transportation engineer 10, Road Design, Design

Delores Nelson, human resources manager 13, Human Resources, Executive

Timothy Schutt, transportation maintenance worker 6, Maintenance, Metro Region

Michael Sherer, engineering technician 8, Bridge, Construction and Technology

Dolores Shiner, secretary 9, Administration, Escanaba TSC, Superior Region

Steve Simon, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge, University Region

Mark Smyth, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton TSC, University Region

Paul South, transportation engineer 11, Development, Coloma TSC, Southwest Region

Brian Southworth, engineering technician 8, Construction and Technology

Rick Sparks, auto mechanic 9, Mason A&E, University Region

Mike Stoltz, construction technician 8, Grand Rapids TSC, Grand Region

Daniel Townsend, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton TSC, University Region

Randy Walker, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton TSC, University Region

Matthew Webb, transportation planner 12, University Region

Eve Wilcox, work processing assistant 7, Contracts, Financial Services

Mark Wilson, construction technician 10, Kalamazoo TSC, Southwest Region

Promotions

Carol Aldrich, licensed engineer manager 14, Aeronautics

Leo Arens, licensed transportation engineer specialist 13, Traffic and Safety

Dave Arndt, automotive mechanic supervisor 11, A&E Garage

Jeffrey Bennett, engineering technician 11, Delivery, Grand Region

Michael Blackledge, department analyst 9, Design

Linda Bourdlais, executive secretary 10, Executive, International Bridge Authority

Chris Burnell, licensed engineer manager 14, Design

Claire Carter, senior executive management assistant 11, Office of Governmental Affairs, Executive

Dan DeYonke, state administrative assistant 15, Administration, Aeronautics

Steve Douglas, property analyst 14, Escanaba, Superior Region

Larry Doyle, transportation engineer specialist 13, Road Construction, Design

Roger Ford, transportation maintenance worker 9, Reed City, North Region

Imad Gedaoun, licensed engineer manager 14, Traffic and Safety

Donald Hicks, transportation maintenance worker 9, Charlotte, University Region

Brenda Kafer, transportation maintenance worker 9, Adrian, University Region

Douglas Lynch, transportation maintenance worker 9, Highway Operations

C. Thomas Maki, senior deputy director 20, Strategic Initiatives, Executive

Steven Minton, licensed transportation engineer 13, Port Huron TSC, Metro Region

Arturo Morales, transportation maintenance worker 9, Lansing TSC, University Region

Mark Pearson, landscape design specialist 13, Project Development, Design

Betsy Steudle, transportation engineer specialist 13, Road Construction, Design

Kirk Steudle, senior policy executive 18, Administration, Bay Region

Matthew Thomas, construction technician 11, Greenville TSC, Grand Region

Larry Tibbits, senior deputy director 20, Highway Operations, Executive

Mike Walker, transportation maintenance supervisor 12, Newberry TSC, Superior Region

Raymond Wood, transportation maintenance coordinator 12, Newberry TSC, Superior Region

Christian Youngs, transportation engineer 12, Grand Rapids TSC, Grand Region

Births/Adoptions

Denise Curl, secretary, traffic and safety, and her husband, Tom, senior traffic technician, are proud adoptive parents of Dylan Thomas, born July 21, 2000. The couple became Dylan's foster parents when he was two weeks old and the adoption was final on Dec. 14, 2001.

Jason Potts, transportation maintenance worker, Zilwaukee Bridge, and his wife, Stephanie, are happy to announce the arrival of Cade Matthew, born Oct. 11. Cade has a big brother named Jason.

Kathy Bolthouse, Muskegon TSC, became a grandma on Oct. 24 when Jacob Michael was born to Ken and Tobi Hildebrand.

Chris Youngs, Grand Rapids TSC assistant delivery engineer, and his wife, Katie, are happy to announce the arrival of Mary Isabelle, born Oct. 28.

Appointments

Betty Jean Awrey, Plymouth, was re-appointed by Gov. John Engler to the State Transportation Commission. Her term expires Dec. 21, 2004.

John Garside, Hickory Corners, was re-appointed by Gov. John Engler to the State Transportation Commission. His term expires Dec. 21, 2004.

Continued on page 17



Doug Novak

Governmental Affairs Office Monitors Issues Impacting MDOT

The new Michigan legislative news column is designed to keep employees up-to-date on what's happening at the state level. If you have questions or need information about Michigan legislative business, please contact the Office of Governmental Affairs through their intranet site on The MDOT Interchange.

What are some of MDOT's current legislative issues and initiatives?

We expect this year to be especially busy as the Office of Governmental Affairs continues to work with principal legislators on a multitude of issues that will have significant impact on the department. Here are some highlights of both recent and upcoming activity:

Chief among OGA's key initiatives is implementation of a statewide transportation asset management plan, which was a major recommendation of the P.A. 51 study committee. Because of limited resources and increased demand for efficiency and accountability, development of a standardized collection and reporting procedure of road and bridge data for all jurisdictions will provide comparable performance standards. Basically, this systematic approach of asset management will allow all road jurisdictions to uniformly assess the effectiveness of various transportation infrastructure investment strategies. MDOT already has partnered with a county road agency for an asset management pilot project.

Tied in with asset management is legislation to provide for a uniform definition of road maintenance in P.A. 51 to enable the proposed asset

management council to use consistent data. Diligent efforts are ongoing with the bill sponsor and Transportation Committee members to draft a final bill which will be beneficial to all road interests.

Several other issues which will likely undergo considerable legislative deliberation include updating and revising specific sections of the Michigan Aeronautics Code. The general intent of this bill is to update definitions, revise licensing provisions, establish standards for ultra-lights and seaplanes, establish a statutory garage-keepers lien for the storage, maintenance, and repair of aircraft, establish criminal penalties for particular violations, and clarify certain authority of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission.

Here are a few other issues that OGA will continue to monitor and provide information about in future issues of *MDOT Today*: creating the Michigan Rail Loan Assistance program in state statute; utilizing MDOT right-of-way and designated facilities for intelligent transportation service infrastructure; establishing warranties on repairs and new road and bridge projects; requiring diagnostic review of a railroad crossing under specified circumstances; and establishing a Detroit-area regional transportation authority.

What are your success stories during the past year?

We are pleased to report that several bills OGA worked on were signed into law by Governor John Engler. Highlights of the most significant include: establishing a pavement demonstration project program to test new pavement designs; increasing penalties for injuring or killing a worker in a construction zone; consolidating the designation of all memorial highways in the state under one act and requiring private contributions to pay for the cost of sign fabrication and maintenance; increasing the maximum amount for which the department may contract without approval from the State Administrative Board; prohibiting weapons in the sterile area of commercial airport property, along with establishing penalties and sentencing guidelines.

Where can I get more information?

The Office of Governmental Affairs now has an intranet site: <http://interchange/oga/>.

We hope our site will make it easy for employees to access a multitude of services, such as: a list of transportation legislation, bill status, and public acts; detailed information on memorial highways; the ability to review MDOT's administrative rules; and links to many other related sites.

Doug Novak is MDOT's legislative administrator for the Office of Governmental Affairs. To reach him, call 517-373-3946 or e-mail: novakd@michigan.gov

"The execution of the laws is more important than the making of them."

—Thomas Jefferson, U.S. President

MDOT Family Tree

Continued from page 15



Deaths

Dale Clarence Kivi, 62, died April 17 in Rock, MI. He worked as a construction technician in Construction Division for many years before going to Right-of-Way, where he retired in 1988. Most of his working career was in the Upper Peninsula. He is survived by three children, Keith, Karen and Kevin, and special friends Carol and June.

Helen Powers, 88, died Sept. 30. Helen began working for Aeronautics in 1952 and retired in 1977. She was an editor of the publication *Michigan Aviation*.



Nelson Triplett

Nelson Triplett, 47, died Dec. 25 in Lansing from complications of an illness. Nelson was a financial program manager in Aeronautics. He loved all sports, especially basketball. He is survived by his wife of nearly 22 years, Lorna, four step-children, his father, four sisters and two brothers.



Richard Doell

Richard (Dick) Doell, 54, died Jan. 21 following a valiant battle with cancer. He was employed for 33 years as a drafting technician supervisor in Design. He was a mentor to other techs and served on several drafting committees. He helped lead the effort to establish an employee recognition program at MDOT. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, son, Robert, and daughter, Linsey.

COURTESY OF DOELL FAMILY

Government Works on Strategies To Help with Crisis

Our enemies are bringing out the best in Americans and that is why we are overcoming the adversity that has been thrust upon us since the Sept. 11 attacks. It has been amazing to watch the turn of events in Washington, D.C., as President Bush and Congress try to find ways to deal with the many issues that have arisen.



Debbie Marshall

What is Congress doing about the aviation crisis?

The immediate crisis was keeping the airlines solvent in the immediate wake of the attacks. Congress passed the *Airline Relief Act*, which included a direct grant to airlines for the days they were grounded, some immediate "war risk" insurance so that they were insured against further terrorist acts, and a loan guarantee program for the longer term problem of keeping them solvent.

As I write this article, Congress is finishing work on an Aviation Security Bill which would, among other things: provide changes in the way aviation security is handled by federalizing part or all of the security screeners at airports; provide more funds for security improvements; and authorize an expansion of the Federal Air Marshal program. There likely will be other legislation as things evolve, but these two bills are a good start in dealing with the immediate problems.

What else do we need to worry about?

Try not to worry. I really think that the last few months are a good example of government working well. To that end, I know the U.S. Department of Transportation is working on tools for risk assessment to help states deal with potential threats to critical infrastructure. A good team effort on issues like this will serve us very well during this crisis and for years to come.

What is the status at our border crossings?

We are still concerned about the possible delays that could be caused by the increased security at our critical border crossings with Canada. We are working with the Michigan Congressional Delegation to increase the number of Customs and Immigration & Naturalization Service staff at the border and have had some success with that. The problem is that there is a lag time of seven to nine months in actually getting people in place. As a short-term solution, Gov. John Engler called upon the National Guard to assist in inspections at the crossings. We were concerned that we would run out of funding to continue this assistance. With the help of the delegation, we convinced the Bush administration to give us funding to continue deployment of the Guard until the long-term staffing issue can be resolved.

"I bring out the worst in my enemies and that's how I get them to defeat themselves."
—Roy Cohn

Debbie Marshall is our federal legislative liaison in Washington, D.C. To reach her, call 202-624-5840, or e-mail marshallD@michigan.gov



New Bay Region engineer and chief operations officer named

Kirk Steudle, former deputy region engineer for Metro Region, is the new Bay Region engineer. Kirk is taking the place of Larry Tibbits, who was recently



Kirk Steudle



Larry Tibbits

promoted to chief operations officer at MDOT. Kirk is no stranger to the Bay Region, having served as the manager of the Bay City TSC from 1997 through 1999. A licensed professional engineer, he has been with MDOT for 15 years. Larry Tibbits was appointed chief operations officer in November. He began his career with MDOT in 1970 as an engineer-in-training and held various positions in traffic engineering and public transportation. In 1990, he was named railroad

coordination engineer. By 1994, he became the Bay Region engineer. At that time, discussions began in earnest to create the Transportation Service Centers concept. Larry has played a major role in the development of the department's TSCs and in helping to move trained department staff to those offices. There are now 26 TSCs throughout the state.

L'Anse service facility wins national environmental award

The crew at the L'Anse service facility has something to be proud of: They won the 2001 Excellence in Storage Award. Out of thousands of local, state and federal municipalities across the country, the facility was chosen as the top recipient. Each year, the Salt Institute encourages environmentally sensitive salt-storage practices through-

out the United States. The L'Anse facility, located in the Superior Region, was recognized for having an excellent physical facility and policies, and for having a commitment to an environmentally conscious operation. "This is the first time that we submitted for the award – and we won it," noted John Dault, L'Anse lead worker. Congratulations to everyone at the facility!

MDOT projects receive awards from the Michigan Asphalt Paving Association

Ten MDOT projects recently received top honors from MAPA for high-quality use of asphalt pavement. In the Bay Region there were four jobs: US-127/M-61 in Clare County; the Pere Marquette Rail Trail non-motorized path in Isabella County; US-127 near Mount Pleasant in Isabella County; and the Fenton Park-and-Ride Lot in Genesee County. In the Superior Region there were two projects: US-41 in Baraga County and M-48 in Chippewa County. In the Grand Region there were two projects: US-31 in

Muskegon County (shown in photo) and M-6 in Kent County. Southwest Region was honored for M-66 in downtown Battle Creek. University Region was recognized for M-100 in Eaton County. Staff from the contractors and MDOT should take a bow!

UPTRAN's Darlene Mans fulfills her dreams with LCC scholarship

Darlene Mans, secretary to the Passenger Transportation Division in UPTRAN, decided to re-enter academia, several years after graduating from high school. She applied to Lansing Community College and for an LCC Foundation scholarship. Then the doubts and fears set in. As Darlene put it: "I wasn't sure I could handle college. I started feeling unsure of myself and considered putting off my return to school. Then I received notice that I had been selected for the Reba Rummell Scholarship. It was one of the happiest days of my life! Right then and there, I knew I would be going back (to school). That scholarship was just the

US-31 in Muskegon County wins MAPA honors.



L'Anse staff wins national environmental award.



incentive I needed – it let me know that someone believed in me. If it hadn't been for that scholarship, I'm not sure I would have had the confidence to fulfill my dreams." Darlene was one of two LCC scholarship recipients highlighted in *Career Focus*, an LCC publication.



M-43 in Kalamazoo recycles old bricks into retaining walls.

Old bricks transformed into new wall in Kalamazoo

During \$3.4 million worth of improvements to M-43 (West Main Street) in Kalamazoo which widened and resurfaced lanes, the Kalamazoo TSC worked with neighborhood associations to help preserve the historic aspects of the area. The bricks under the old pavement were used in the construction of a retaining wall along portions of the project. The result was both attractive and functional while preserving a little chunk of history.

Detroit TSC's Bernie Wells honored with Spirit of Detroit Award

Congratulations to Bernie Wells, maintenance supervisor at the Detroit Maintenance Facility, for his exceptional work on the Keep Detroit Beautiful Group, Clean Sweep, Angels Night and the Thanksgiving Day Parade. For his efforts, he was awarded the *Spirit of Detroit* award from the city and a Community Beautification Award from Wayne County Executive Ed McNamara. A *Spirit of Detroit* award is given in recognition of exceptional achievement, outstanding leadership and dedication to improving the quality of life. Way to go, Bernie! Your special efforts really make a difference in Detroit neighborhoods. We're proud to have you as part of the MDOT family.

Howard City TSC opens its doors for the public

The 16 full-time employees of the Howard City TSC welcomed the public during an open house of their new facility last year. The TSC – nestled in a beautiful grove of tall trees on M-46 north of Howard City – serves Ionia, Mecosta and Montcalm counties. Manager Karl Koivisto invites you to stop in and say hello if you're in the area.



Howard City TSC now open for business.

Reconstructed US-131 bridge in Allegan County has new automated deicing system

In addition to making \$3.6 million in improvements to the US-131 bridge over the Norfolk Southern Railway in northern Allegan County, MDOT installed an automated deicing system. "Sensors were placed in the pavement that automatically trigger the system to start when precipitation begins to accumulate on the pavement," said Greg Johnson, Kalamazoo TSC manager. "It will automatically spray a deicing solution onto the roadway prior to any significant buildup." A weather-monitoring system is connected to a computer, and road surface sensors let the computer know when to turn the system on. When weather conditions and precipitation indicate there is a possibility that the roadway might become slippery, the system turns on. It should be a safer winter in Allegan County – at least on this bridge.

ASCE Michigan Section's Mackinac Scholarship tops \$120,000

To continue to honor the Mackinac Bridge as Michigan's #1 Civil Engineering Project of the 20th Century, the American Society of Civil

Engineer's Michigan Section announced a year-long kickoff fund drive to endow the Mackinac Scholarship. To honor founder-level donors (\$1,000 or more) to the Mackinac Scholarship, a limited edition print by renowned artist Craig Holmes was commissioned. The scholarship's two largest donors – ASCE's Michigan Section and the Michigan Road Builders Association – elected to give their framed art prints away as gifts. At a ceremony, MRBA donated their print to MDOT. Shown in the photo are: ASCE Michigan Section President Jim Hegarty; Director Greg Rosine; Tom Maki, Director of Strategic Planning and Initiatives; and ASCE Michigan Section Past President Don Mercer from MDOT Traffic and Safety.

Anyone wishing to learn more about the Mackinac Scholarship can visit the ASCE Michigan Section site: <http://sections.asce.org/michigan/>. The Mackinac Scholarship is a new, two-year scholarship grant given to a Michigan resident, Civil Engineering student entering his or her junior year of study at an ABET-accredited college or university. 🐾



Mackinac Bridge print is donated to MDOT.

We requested to know of any immediate family that MDOTers have serving in the active military – and about any MDOTers who are serving in the military reserves. We commend you and thank you for helping to make our country a safer place!



Present Arms! A Salute to our MDOT Family in the Military

MDOTers in the Reserves

COURTESY OF T. DOYLE



Tom Doyle

Tom Doyle, Planning
Captain, Army National Guard, Flint, MI
(plans officer)

Brent Hadfield, Maintenance Coordinator, Grand Rapids TSC
Staff Sergeant, Army National Guard, Grand Ledge, MI
(helicopter crew chief)

COURTESY OF B. HADFIELD



Brent Hadfield

Paul South, Design Engineer, Coloma TSC
Major, Army National Guard, Indianapolis, IN
(assistant division engineer)

Ken Tiffany, Design
Staff Sergeant, Army National Guard, Grand Ledge, MI
(electronic warfare specialist)

Richard Tyrer, Maintenance, Brighton TSC
Technical Sergeant, Air National Guard, Selfridge AFB, MI (avionics technician)

* Doug's daughter, Jennifer Branch, was a Construction Technician for MDOT in the University Region just prior to joining the military.

MDOTers with Active Military Family

Marsha Ballard, Design
Son: Private First Class Kyle Ballard, Army, Fork Polk, LA (logistics)

Douglas Branch, Construction & Technology
Daughter: Specialist 4 Jennifer Branch,* Army, Oahu, HI (language specialist)

Tina Fisher, Maintenance, Mt. Pleasant TSC
Brother: Master Sergeant Brian Jones, Army, Fort Stewart, GA (infantry)

Julie Gee, Information Management
Son: Petty Officer First Class Scott Gee, Navy, Elkhart, IN (recruiter)

Pat Hixson, Planning
Son: Lance Corporal Jonathan C. Mestemaker, Marines, Havelock, NC (aircraft mechanic)

Kurt Kunde, Traffic and Safety
Son: Lance Corporal Mike Kunde, Marines, Camp LeJeune, NC (amphibious vehicle specialist)

Gordon Marshall, Planning
Son: Machinist Mate 2nd Class Ross Marshall, Navy, New London, CT (nuclear machinery specialist)

Leslie Miyasato, Information Management
Stepson: Staff Sergeant Aaron Miyasato, Air Force, San Angelo, TX (intelligence instructor)

Joe Prevost, Maintenance, Blue Water Bridge
Daughter: Private 2nd Class Malissa Prevost, Fort Sam Houston, TX (medic-in-training)

Jennifer Rama, Construction, Allen Park Field Office
Brother: Technical Sergeant Scott Fisher, Air Force, LakenHeath AFB, England (security manager)

Ken Tiffany, Design
Brother: Major Jim Tiffany, Army, Vicenza, Italy (doctor)

Jennie Yung, Design
Brother: Sergeant Reinaldo Yung, National Guard, Lansing, MI (field artillery)

"I'm really proud of all the support we are receiving from people and the nation as a whole. It means a lot."

-U.S. Army PFC Kyle Ballard,
son of Marsha Ballard

MDOT Today

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Joan H. Justema**

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